

Filed for intro on 02/09/95
Senate Bill _____
By _____

House No. HB0933
By Pinion

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, relative to the Tennessee National Guard State Tuition Exemption Program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1, is amended by adding the following new section:

Section 49-7-123.

(a) There is hereby established the Tennessee National Guard State Tuition Exemption Program (TNGSTEP) to provide educational benefits to members of the Tennessee army or air national guard.

(b)(1) The adjutant general of Tennessee shall be responsible for overall policies, guidance, administration, implementation, and proper utilization of the program of tuition exemption for guard members provided in this section.

(2) The adjutant general will administer the TNGSTEP through the state education services officer who will monitor program participation and eligibility status.

(c)(1) Any student enrolled or who may enroll in a public institution of higher learning of this state, who is seventeen (17) years of age or over and who is serving in the Tennessee national guard shall be exempt from all tuition charges imposed by any such institution of higher learning, if the applicant for free tuition is presently domiciled in Tennessee, and, if at least eighteen (18) years of age, is a registered voter.

(2) A member of the Tennessee national guard must meet the eligibility criteria listed herein prior to the first day of the academic period for which TNGSTEP will be used, and must continue to meet such criteria while enrolled:

- (A) Completion of basic training;
- (B) Signing a TNGSTEP Memorandum of Agreement;
- (C) Not test positive for drugs, alcohol or declare themselves as self-referrals;
- (D) Meet school residency requirements;
- (E) Not be placed on the Tennessee national guard weight control program;
- (F) Pass the Tennessee national guard physical fitness test;
- (G) Be a member in good standing of the active Tennessee national guard at the beginning of and throughout the entire semester or quarter for which he receives benefits and to meet this requisite he must continuously maintain satisfactory participation in the Tennessee national guard as prescribed by regulations in effect and respectively promulgated by department of the army, department of the air force, and the Tennessee department of military affairs;

(H) Make satisfactory academic progress toward graduation; and

(I) Agree to serve three (3) years in the active TNG after completion of studies for which benefits are received.

(d) This exemption may be claimed for five (5) separate academic years or until the receipt of a bachelor's degree, whichever occurs first. However, any student receiving a tuition exemption under the provisions of this section who is mobilized or called to active duty is entitled to an extension of the time the tuition exemption may be claimed equal to the amount of time served on active duty.

(e) If the service in the Tennessee national guard of a student terminates or he is placed on scholastic probation while receiving the benefits of any exemption afforded by this section, his exemption shall immediately be forfeited, and he shall pay to such institution all tuition charges from which he was exempted pursuant to this section for the academic semester or quarter in which his service terminates or he is placed on scholastic probation.

(f) As used in this section "tuition charges" include student maintenance fees.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.